CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of distributed collaborative computing comprising:

5 partitioning a collaboration function into sub-functions;

assigning at least one said sub-function to each of a plurality of logical processes;

associating a respective management process with

10 each of said plurality of logical processes, said logical processes configured so that each said logical process is capable of communicating with every other said logical process thru said respective management

15 process;

communicating between said logical processes using said respective management processes; and

monitoring said respective management processes with a single supervisor process;

20 discovering the presence of each other said management process using a communications module in each respective management process;

wherein each said management process further comprises a transaction server.

25 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said communications module further comprises computer instructions implementing a secure inter-process communications protocol.

3.   The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one of said management processes acts as a central coordinator for said collaboration function.

4.   The method of Claim 3, wherein said central
5 coordinator receives state information from each other said management processes.

5.   A computer program for use in distributed
10 collaborative computing, comprising computer instructions for:

partitioning a collaboration function into sub-
    functions;

assigning at least one said sub-function to each
15   of a plurality of logical processes;

associating a respective management process with
    each of said plurality of logical processes,
    said logical processes configured so that
    each said logical process is capable of
20   communicating with every other said logical
    process thru said respective management
    process;

communicating between said logical processes using
    said respective management processes; and
25 monitoring said respective management processes
    with a single supervisor process;

discovering the presence of each other said
    management process using a communications
    module in each respective management process;

wherein each said management process further comprises a transaction server.

6. The computer program of Claim 5, wherein said communications module further comprises computer instructions implementing a secure inter-process communications protocol.

7. The computer program of Claim 5, wherein at least one of said management processes acts as a central coordinator for said collaboration function.

8. The computer program of Claim 7, wherein said central coordinator receives state information from each other said management processes.

9. A computer-readable medium storing a computer program executable by a plurality of server computers, the computer program comprising computer instructions for:

partitioning a collaboration function into sub-functions;

assigning at least one said sub-function to each of a plurality of logical processes;

associating a respective management process with each of said plurality of logical processes, said logical processes configured so that each said logical process is capable of communicating with every other said logical

process thru said respective management

process;

communicating between said logical processes using

said respective management processes; and

5   monitoring said respective management processes

with a single supervisor process;

discovering the presence of each other said

management process using a communications

module in each respective management process;

10   wherein each said management process further comprises

a transaction server.

10. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9,

wherein said communications module further comprises

computer instructions implementing a secure inter-

15   process communications protocol.

11. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9,

wherein at least one of said management processes acts

as a central coordinator for said collaboration

function.

20   12. The computer-readable medium of Claim 11,

wherein said central coordinator receives state

information from each other said management processes.

25   13. A computer data signal embodied in a carrier

wave, comprising computer instructions for:

partitioning a collaboration function into sub-

functions;

assigning at least one said sub-function to each
of a plurality of logical processes;

associating a respective management process with
each of said plurality of logical processes,

5   said logical processes configured so that
each said logical process is capable of
communicating with every other said logical
process thru said respective management
process;

10   communicating between said logical processes using
said respective management processes; and

monitoring said respective management processes
with a single supervisor process;

discovering the presence of each other said

15   management process using a communications
module in each respective management process;

wherein each said management process further comprises
a transaction server.

    14.   The computer data signal of Claim 13, wherein

20 said communications module further comprises computer
instructions implementing a secure inter-process
communications protocol.

    15.   The computer data signal of Claim 13, wherein
at least one of said management processes acts as a

25 central coordinator for said collaboration function.

    16.   The computer data signal of Claim 15, wherein
said central coordinator receives state information
from each other said management processes.